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ABSTRACT

A description is given of a state-wide endeavor to improve the schools in Arkansas. Five recommendations provide the framework for innovative planning for the schools: (1) educators, elected officials and community leaders should assertively market "Restructuring for Higher Order Learning" throughout the state as the logical and necessary step in the process of improving student learning; (2) state and local policies and practices should encourage and support the development and retention of forceful educational administrators; (3) state and local authorities should adopt policies that provide incentives, technical assistance, and a network of resources that positively influence and support effective school-level change; (4) restructuring initiatives in the schools and school districts should be clearly focused on increasing and raising student success rates; and (5) all stake holders in the education system should be patient and remain both committed to and involved in promising education reform. The rationale for each of these recommendations is discussed. The restructuring strategies implemented in four Arkansas school districts are described. (JD)

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Restructuring Education: Agenda for the 1990's

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Association of Teacher Educators

71st Annual Meeting
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RESTRUCTURING EDUCATION:
AGENDA FOR THE 1990'S

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INTRODUCTION

Around the nation, individuals with a stake in the educational system are setting new goals and taking new and decisive action. Since the early part of the 1980's, education has been the dominant issue on the state policy agendas. With the enactment of Mississippi's Education Reform Act in 1982 and the release of A Nation at Risk (1983), virtually every state substantially increased funding for education and, at the same time, enacted new policies, programs, and regulations to raise performance standards for students, teachers, and schools.

THE FIRST WAVE OF REFORM

Even before the release of A Nation at Risk, Arkansas was actively involved in studying, planning for and promoting some far-reaching reform strategies in the state's educational system. Beginning with the 1983 special session of the Arkansas legislature, Governor Bill Clinton had initiated the first wave of reforms in public education with Arkansas Quality Education Act 445. This Act resulted in the establishment of a broad set of education standards which formed the basis for school accreditation in Arkansas. These minimum standards, as they are called, became effective in 1987 and with minimum standards in place, the quality of public education began to improve. Course offerings and enrollment in physics, chemistry, advanced math and foreign languages increased. Reading and math standardized test scores went up, dropout rates declined, and more high school graduates started going to college.

Restructuring has also had an impact upon the delivery systems used in the schools. Through the use of technology, students in Cabot, Arkansas, are learning Russian via satellite link-ups with schools in North Carolina. More than technology is involved in creating new curriculum opportunites for students. Japanese teachers are teaching their native language to students in Conway, Harrison and Russellville, Arkansas, to name a few districts. These changes are not happening by chance and, although relatively recent, they provide only a glimpse at the exciting programs being piloted in over thirty school districts which have joined the Coalition of Essential Schools and are part of the Governor's plan to restructure education in Arkansas.

The national move to reform had begun with the "At Risk" report. Increasing student graduation requirements, strengthening teacher preparations and certification requirements, and generally tightening up on education standards was the order of the day throughout the country. Arkansas established a controversial testing program for all teachers and with only a few failing, it became obvious that the problems in education went much deeper. What was needed was not a tightening up of traditional structures, but a complete rethinking of the Arkansas educational system, a complete restructuring.

Restructuring is not the same as reform, which implies fixing something that is broken. Restructuring focuses on improving, adapting, and redesigning to keep pace with the times. Restructuring is is well known in the automotive industry. If something is not selling well, plants are closed and a complete design shift is made to accomodate the changing times. According to Carruthers (1990), educators must do with our schools, colleges and universities what Detroit has done with the car.

Restructuring brought with it a new concept. Instead of legislating educational reform, the move was to restructure from the grassroots up rather than from the top down. Site-based management, teacher empowerment, became the new "catch words" in Arkansas. "Improving educational productivity requires a restructuring of the entire education system, and not just the schools. The structure and process of governance and control at the state and local levels must be adjusted in order to accomodate and support necessary changes in the organization and management of instruction in schools and classrooms." (Cohen 1988) The Arkansas State Department of Education (ASDE) was telling the school districts thatdoing what is right is more important than doing it right. There still remains some conflict within the ADSE between the regulatory bodies and those responsible for restructuring, but it is getting much better as an increasing number of school districts are filing restructuring plans and the "left hand" is increasing made a part of what the "right hand" is involved in.

THE SECOND WAVE OF REFORM

The National Governor's Association had determined in 1986 that despite their earlier efforts, "the need for education reform continues..." (Cohen 1988). Governor Clinton became involved in the national debate on restructuring schools which charged the governors with putting some meat on the bones of minimum competencies. In June of 1986, nine school districts came together with the University of Arkansas and the University of Central Arkansas to form The Arkansas Renewal Consortium. This group was originally separate from the Governor's restructuring movement, but with his blessing sought to become members of the John Goodlad National Renewal Network. In August of 1986, Dr. John Goodlad conducted a press conference at the State Capitol to announce that Arkansas had been selected as the first of twelve states to collaborate in a nation-wide network of public schools and universities in a effort to address common issues and problems that face education in America.

In December 1987, the Governor sponsored a conference which carried out that charge. The deadline for compliance with Arkansas Minimum Standards passed in September 1987, and the time was right to move forward. Twenty districts were invited to attend with fifteen accepting. these fifteen districts represented the pilot round of restructuring efforts implemented in the 1988-89 school year.

The conference, Schools for Arkansas' Future: Restructuring for Higher Order Learning, drew representatives from national education organization, educational consultants, State Board of Education members, state legislators, and others in the education community. As requested, each of the fifteen districts was represented by a school district team composed of the superintendent, assistant administrators, local school board members, and a school planning team composed of the school principal and teachers. The teams ranged from four to six members, with the composition left to the discretion of the district staff.

The selection of school districts included a commitment to participatory management, an understanding of effective school-site management, demonstrated progressive educational philosophies and an acceptance of the notion that all children can learn. (Minutes 1987) This was the first conference of its kind in the countryand provided an opportunity for the experts in current educational theory to share their ideas directly with those who were in the best position to put those theories into practice, the local school officials and the teachers in the classrooms. The intent was to go beyond broad abstract discussion to specific discussions on various elements of restructuring such as scheduling, assessment, and teacher collaboration.

Because restructuring is largely a "bottom up" effort, it was essential that school faculty present have some understanding of the principles involved and commit themselves to expanding the communication among other faculty members. the majority of the participants were in agreement and the theme, Restructuring for Higher Order Learning, has carried over and now refers generally to the second wave of educational reform in Arkansas. (Perry 1989)

The Frost Project

In January 1988, following the Governor's Conference on Restructuring Schools, governor Clinton was informed thatthe Frost Foundation had given the Education Commission of the States (ECS) a small grant to assist two states in the development of a plan to improve school leadership in their respective states. The Foundation specifically requested that Arkansas be one of the two states offered the assistance.

The offer was a timely one. The project fit well with other efforts to improve public education that were underway in Arkansas and Governor Clinton accepted the offer from the Frost Foundation. The Governor's staff, with ADSE assistance, began identifying a small team representing a group of key leaders drawn from school level, district and state level staffs, universities, Governor's office, ECS staff and other appropriate decision-making groups to guide the activities.

A significant aspect of the Frost Grant was to be the development of a state plan to improve education leadership in Arkansas. this was to be the combined responsibility of the Action Committee and the groups that were to be convened in two forums.

A group of key leaders representing professional educators and associations, policymakers, higher education, the Governor's office and the Arkansas Department of Education were called together to articulate the promises and pitfalls of restructuring schools within the ADSE principles. Also, they were to focus on changes that needed to be made by the state, districts and universities which would allow the school's new designs to flourish.

The Action Committee agreed on five recommendations that, if implemented, promise continuous progress toward excellence in education.

I. Educators, elected officials and community leaders should assertively market "Restructuring for Higher Order Learning" throughout the state as the logical and necessary next step in the process of improving student learning.

II. State and local authorities through policies and practices should encourage and support the development and retention of well trained, forceful educational administrators with a clear and compelling vision of what our schools have been, what they are presently, and what they should become.

III. State and local authorities should adopt policies that provide incentives, technical assistance, and a network of resources that positively influence and support effective school-level change. In order to properly evaluate reform efforts, policymakers should encourage and support the development of appropriate assessment tools and procedures.

IV. School districts and individual schools should keep their restructuring initiatives clearly focused on increasing and raising student success as envisioned and defined in the state's guiding principles for restructured schools.

V. All state holders in the education system should be patient and remain both committed and involved in promising education reform.

RECOMMENDATION I

Educators, elected officials and community leaders should assertively market "restructuring for higher order learning" throughout the state as the logical and necessary next step in the process of improving student learning.

Rationale:

ALL students can acquire and should acquire higher order skills and knowledge. This belief underlies the basic rationale for restructuring schools in Arkansas. Schools as they are currently structured are all ill-suited for the challenge. Too often, teachers teach for remediation and to the lowest common denominator and neglect higher order thinking altogether. It is increasingly acknowledged that even though American education today is better than it has ever been and that our public schools reach more students, provide more services and produce at a higher level than schools of the past, the current structure of our schools is not designed to meet the needs of students who will live and work in the 21st century.

We have come to realize that we cannot have a world class economy with dropout rates that average 25%. These dropouts help to swell the ranks of welfare recipients, represent lost tax revenues and are disproportionately represented in crime statistics. Even among those who do graduate, we notice an alarming number who lack the habits of mind needed to become good citizens and productive workers in a rapidly changing society.

RECOMMENDATION II

State and local authorities, through policies and practices, should encourage and support the development and retention of well-trained, forceful educational administrators with a clear and compelling vision of what our schools have been, what they are presently, and what they should become. (This often presents a problem when we find adminstrators who are not ready to change roles. A common belief is that no good ever came of a committee decision and a "benevolent dictator" is a far more efficient adminstrator than one who listens to his staff. We also find some school boards who believe it is better to have only one person to contend with. Having a whole school of teachers with opinions is a frightening concept!)

Rationale:

Strong leadership is the key to school improvement and more learning. It is the common thread that runs through all effective schools. The leaders we choose, how we choose them, and what we expect and permit them to do, reflect the depth of our commitment to preparing learners to be thoughtful, fulfilled, contributing members of society today and tomorrow. (Are we doing an adequate job in our teacher preparation programs of preparing students to be leaders in their profession and not just history teachers or kindergarten teachers?)

Effective leaders conceive and articulate goals that lift others out of their"petty preoccupations", carry them above the tensions that divide a society and unite them in the pursuit of worthy objectives.

State and local authorities should act to help increase the pool of good leaders and enhance their ability to be successful.

3. Restructured schools must demonstrate the belief that instruction is most effective in a school environment characterized by collegiality among the staff and a wide range of instructional practices. Further is must be clear in such schools that teachers are both responsible for instructional processes and accountable for the outcomes of learning.

4. Restructured schools do not all look alike and do not seek "one best way." They will reflect changes in systems of instruction, the use of time, the learning environment, organizational structure, leadership, and the way teachers and other staff members interact with each other and with students.

5. In restructured schools the principal is a "leader of leaders" with the primary task in this regard being the development of leadership in teachers. In the exercise of such leadership, the principal of a restructured school is less concerned about doing things right than with doing the right thing.

The state should provide an incentive grant program and technical assistance to encourage innovation in school-based management and shared decision-making in order to improve learning. technical assistance is envisioned as encompassing a variety of services including: provision of relevant training and development for teachers, principals, superintendents and school board members.

RECOMMENDATION IV

Districts and individual schools should keep their restructuring initiatives clearly focused on increasing and raising student success as envisioned in the state guiding principles for restructured schools.

Rationale:

The initial and continuous focus of any restructuring should be on the learner and the knowledge,skills, values that help that learner to be a thoughtful, fulfilled, contributing member of society now and in the future. Instruction, curriculum, group size, time, organization, et al. should directly contribute to the desired outcome(s).

Each school site is unique and what may work at one site may not work at another. Hence, there is no one model or formula for restructuring. It is important that the following guiding principles be honored as the framework for restructuring schools in Arkansas.

1. The leadership of the local district (Board, Superintendent and Central Staff) must be committed to the view that the local school is the unit of change and that its teachers and administrators must be enabled and empowered to chart the school's educational course.

2. The clear and undeniable emphasis in restructured schools should be on higher order learning for all students. The "student-as-worker" should be the fundamental concept which guides decisions regarding the structure and organization of the school. The school should view its mission as finding more effective ways to develop the talents and abilities of all its students.

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5. In restructured schools the principal is a "leader of leaders" with the primary task in this regard being the development of leadership in teachers. In the exercise of such leadership, the principal of a restructured school is less concerned about doing things right than with doing the right thing.

6. Restructured schools must be supported by an education community with a clearly articulated vision and an abiding passion for educational excellence in all respects. Without this broad support, leadership, and commitment, "restructuring" cannot endure.

The bottom line is that students today must learn to use their minds well, to think. they need to become active, lifelong learners who are creative, intellectually flexible, careful thinkers, problem solvers, team players, and communicators. They must be well-grounded ethically and rich with a core of common knowledge. This cannot be accomplished with a school system designed for an earlier time. Education must be restructured to meet these goals. Schools must start with higher expectations and higher goals for student learning. The focus of every restructuring action must be on the student.

The changes geared toward enhancing student success are at the heart of school restructuring. After decades of attempts to reform schools, most of which constituted little more than tinkering with surface parts, many observers feel that schools as they are presently organized must be overhauled in ways that fundamentally change the institution of schooling itself. Acknowledging the magnitude of the task, school restructuring proponents nonetheless argue that nothing less than systemwide change will produce schools capable of serving the needs of students, educators, and the community at large. (O'Neil, 1990)

Grouping students by classes according to achievement level is almost universal in schools. Schools use tracking to accommodate instruction to the range of student needs, interests, and abilities. The assumption is that students will learn best when the instructional content is matched well to individual knowledge and abilities. (Braddock, 1990) In practice, this kind of tracking has proven to be one of the most damaging school practices in existence. The goal that tracking seeks to achieve can also be achieved through other methods. Cooperative learning approaches are one major alternative to ability grouping and need to be implemented more extensively. Properly implemented, cooperative learning develops constructive peer learning in a safer psychological environment than in the class at large. Total competition is replaced by collaboration in smaller settings within the class. Cooperative learning activities develop pts will put the kind of effort and commitment into learning and helping each other learn that they put into team sports.

In Bald Knob, cooperative learning is being implemented in the four basic academic areas of the eighth grade. The teachers have chosen the theme of "P.A.L.S." to get the message across to their students. "P.A.L.S." stands for:

P - Positive Thinking
A - Achievement
L - Liking Others
S - Self-Esteem

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Students are assigned to four or five-member learning teams that are mixed in performance level, sex, and ethnicity. The teacher presents a lesson, and then students work within their teams to make sure that all team members have mastered the lesson. Finally, all students take individual quizzes on the material, at which time they may not help one another.

Base scores are established on each student's past averages, and points are awarded based on the degree to which students can meet or exceed their own earlier performance. The points are then averaged to form team scores with certain levels designating Good Teams, Great Teams, and Super Teams. Rewards and certificates are given to all teams with outstanding performance records. Teams are changed every nine weeks and new base scores are computed.

One important effect of team learning is the building of friendships and respect among students of different ethnic backgrounds in desegregated schools. The same applies to handicapped students who are mainstreamed into the classroom. Other come to value the contribution they can make to the team and they become "one of the gang" instead of separate and odd Also, working in teams seems to increase a student's own self-esteem as he becomes more successful in his school work.

As divorce, poverty, and other social ills take their toll on school-age children, educators are being called upon more and more frequently to help raise their student's self-esteem. Our school is currently developing a program called Project SWAT (Students With Ambition Triumph) to motivate students to improve academically and develop to their fullest potential. This will affirm student's worth and dignity, therefore improving academic performance and producing students who are socially and personally responsible. Activities are structured to stress individual pride and an appreciation for the arts. In a rural area where there are few opportunities for students to experience cultural events, hopefully these activities will enhance their awareness. Activities planned by committees of students, parents, and teachers include class competitions, concerts, live theatre, student recognitions, and motivational speakers. By involving the parents in the SWAT Project, a strong partnership between school and home is becoming more noticeable. The goal of the SWAT Project is to have students become more enthusiastic about learning and realize that their potential for success is unlimited School will be challenging. Apathy has caused boredom: SWAT activities will help make learning exciting.

Guidance counselors have their talents and training spread impossibly thin. Every student should be well known by at least one adult. They should be able to rely on that adult to function as a mentor to whom they can turn for academic and emotional support. Many schools are meeting this need by using a teacher advisory program that assigns each staff member a group of 15-17 students to advise them throughout their school years. Advisors and their advisees generally meet on a regular basis so that teachers can monitor students' academic work and encourage responsible behavior. When advisors identify students with serious personal problems, they can encourage them to seek help from the school's guidance staff.

The effect of the advisory system appears to be to reduce alienation of students and to provide each young adolescent with the support of a caring adult who knows that student well. Our school is planning to initiate an advisor program for the 91-92 school year. As a prelude, this year we have a "Positive Strokes" program where every member of the junior high staff has four eighth grade students assigned to them without the knowledge of the students. The staff member tries to show some interest or concern for their students every week, thus providing the entire eighth grade with the support of someone who cares.

Carruthers (1990) states that restructuring is about sharing responsibilities for success, not finding reasons for failure. It is about rebuilding the system, not tearing one another apart. It is about everyone breaking out of his own box and finding new ways of thinking about and, more importantly, doing something about, education. The work of all sectors of society will be necessary to transform schools. Through these efforts, a community of learning can be created that engages those young adolescents for whom life already holds high promise, and welcomes into the mainstream of society those who might otherwise be left behind.

REPORT CARD

The 15 school which agreed in 1988 to serve as informal laboratories of educational reform in Arkansas represent varied school enrollments and geographical locations and are at different levels on the restructuring continuum. All schools selected were in full compliance with the letter and spirit of the Arkansas Standards. They all reflected a solid commitment to the belief that all students can learn, and they all demonstrated an understanding and a commitment to to site-based management.

The Pilot Schools were invited to become risk-takers; to act on their own knowledge and understanding of what needs to be changed in their school settings in order to improve student learning. It was understood that they would take responsibility for not only their successes, but also for their failures. Schools would be responsible for providing the resources needed to carry out their restructuring program. Most of the schools elected to initiate small actionsand adjust them to feedback rather than try to develop a comprehensive plan before acting. The "Mini-starts" often generated broader changes in attitudes and practice.

PINE BLUFF SCHOOL DISTRICT

Pine Bluff High School dropped lower level classes in math, science and English in order to eliminate tracking and raise student expectations. As a result of this change, the classes became more heterogeneous and labeling of students diminished. Performance of the former lower track students generally improved with the change. "They are expected to perform well and they manage to," reports the coordinator of restructuring at Pine Bluff.

Pine Bluff High also created three interdisciplinary teams of 15 teachers. All subject areas are represented on each team: science, art, music, foreign languages, vocational education, special education, social studies, math and English. Each team has a common planning period. Some team members have two conference periods in order to coordinate the efforts of the three teams and manage the necessary planning and preparation from day to day.

Team I - Global Education had as its theme "Discovering America - Linked by Diversity." The team sponsored a school-wide assembly program with follow-up class discussions and are creating a school lecture series. The team developed 6 units including:

Discovering self
school
community
Arkansas
the nation, and
Discovering our neighbors.

In addition to the units, the team is sponsored a Pan American Day at the end of the school year in order to bring together all departments in celebrating being American in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

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Team III - Decades Make a Difference divided into sub-groups and each group selected to focus on either the 50's, the 60's or the 70's. Each sub-group worked to answer the question: "What impact did the events of your decade have on America and how did these events influence future decades?"

The sub-groups prepared activities and lessons around the theme. One activity was a game in which student teams with students at all achievement levels answered questions about science, health, physical education and history of the 50's.

Assessment

Teachermotivation and morale areup. This isattributed to the collegical relationsthat have been established and the freedom allowed teachers to be creative and innovative.

Project leaders admonish schools condemning restructuring that teachers cannot be forced into such a project. They must buy into it. Take it slow, start with a commitment to improve education, try a few things at a time, engage a good core of teachers and watch your program grow.

BALD KNOB SCHOOL DISTRICT

Bald Knob was concerned about students who fell below grade levels in grades K-3. Beginning with this group also facilitated a gradual restructuring process which would encompass the entire system K-12. The program goal was to empower all students to achieve grade level or better on nationally normed tests by the end of the third grade - excluding severely handicapped students.

A set of beliefs ungirds the program:

All students can learn
Barriers, both inside and outside of the school environment, prohibit students from reaching their full potential
Provided the necessary steps are taken to remove recognized internal and external barriers to learning, student will learn
Instructional styles must be adjusted to meet different student needs and to compliment programmatic changes
Coordination of various programs is the real key to meeting the school's objective

Bald Knob continued...

COMPONENTS OF RESTRUCTURING

The instructional component provides for:

1. Raised expectations for student achievement.
2. No pull-outs, tracking, or labeling of students other than for speech therapy, or in cases where the regular classroom teacher cannot provide appropriate instruction for handicapped students.
3. Change in teaching strategy (style) to one in which the teacher is coach, the student is worker. The instructional style also include:
   a. Cooperative learning.
   b. Class as a team.
   c. One for all, all for one attitude.
   d. Parental involvement in instruction, using shared homework method and counseling.
   e. Providing parents with materials making learning a shared responsibility for school/home.
4. Remediation provided by the regular classroom teacher in the regular classroom.
5. Lowered class size to 15-17 students per teacher in order to meet the needs of all students; thereby making individual instruction a reality.
6. Gifted and talented instruction and activities for all students in each classroom.
7. Utilization of high school students from study hall as student assistants and tutors.

The external component phase was already in place. This included:

1. On-site Head Start Program for qualified 3-4 year olds, provided through the Community Action program for Central Arkansas, Inc. provides:
   a. Preschool readiness program
   b. Mandated parenting program

2. S.A.F.E. Program (Student Achievement Facilitation Effort) is designed to afford further help to students who are not achieving at their fullest potential. The program provides full-time employee to serve as liaison for student, home, school, and/or community.

The following strategies are used to accomplish the goals of this program.
   a. Development of a bond with student and home, where trust and caring are self-evident.
   b. Provision of a positive role model.
   c. Routine home visits where the importance of academic achievement and attendance will be stressed.
   d. Work with school and student to facilitate credit accrual for graduation.
   e. Encouragement of participation in extra-curricular activities.
   f. Provision of transportation as needed for off-campus health and social services.

After one year with a Restructured first grade, standardized test scores for first grader rose from the 58th percentile nationally to the 84th percentile, which represents a measurable improvement of 26 percentile points. For special education students, scores jumped from the 15th percentile to the 52nd percentile.

DARDANELLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

I. One project utilizes large interdisciplinary teaching blocks that allow more flexible time use than secondary schools' traditional 55 minutes per subject. Common planning time is allowed for each team to plan and collaborate. As much as a three-hour time block is controlled by the team. There are two blocks for all ninth graders. One is composed of English, Science, Social Studies. Also provided for ninth graders is a skills lab. The lab is a totally innovative course where all freshmen attempt to learn better - the skills of learning. It is a 9th grade and 11th grade American studies (English & American History) block.

II. The 9th grade skills lab is an attempt to help all students learn to learn better. Skills lab utilizes a large peer-tutoring program. In April, the program trained 27 students in Laubach reading. Local volunteers and other students, tutor low achievers and poor readers in skills lab, in resource rooms and sometimes in closets! Peer tutoring is proving successful at Dardanelle High School. The skills lab teachers utilize a variety of learning strategies. ' "We believe modern children must relearn often. Thus, how to learn becomes doubly important."

III. For the seventh year Dardanelle High School has an advisory program. Each teacher serves as an advisor. Each advisor has 15-20 advisees - the same children for four years. They meet 20 minutes every day. the advisory period serves the function of a homeroom, but it is much more. Every advisor is a counselor, an advocate, and a communicator with the parent. Teachers develop 4-year plans and work schedules; do personal development activities and discuss progress reports and projects.

Dardanelle has utilized a district-wide parent advisory committee to help in the development of a complete K-12 curriculum.

The elementary school has developed a sister-school relationship with a school in Honduras and is publishing a bilingual booklet of letters for the two schools.

PERRYVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Perryville has developed an intensive interdisciplinary program. The ATLAS (Advanced Teaching and Learning in Schools) project is the focus of interdisciplinary humanities which include English, History, art and cultural studies.

The impact of the program has been so dramatic that no student has dropped out the ninth grade. In recent years, six to nine student dropped out of the ninth grade.

Teachers and librarians report that even mainstreamed special education students involved in the program no do serious independent research. More students now make the honor roll. The number of ninth graders with disciplinary problems has dropped dramatically.

Students benefit from working in small groups. Four member groups are changed every four and half weeks. In assigning students to groups, attention is given to getting a representative mix of the diversity within the class. Students with different achievement records and backgrounds benefit from working together to complete projects and solve problems.

Students have more control over their learning. they are knowledge workers and the teachers are coaches. Students have become more independent in their learning, more dependent on their own resources, and more willing to look for answers outside the classroom.

Learning is interrelated. Students see how the subject disciplines relate to each other. Learning does not seem so disconnected. One of the team members comments that one of the most exciting things about the program is seeing how students' self-images have been uplifted. "They think more of themselves because they have been able to achieve. they've had a little bit of success and that's motivating."

Other factors which account for the program's success according to interdisciplinary teams are:

> They are a team of four very committed teachers with different teaching styles always willing to be flexible. They grow from each other.
>
> They get a lot of support from other teachers who notice a carryover of the motivation and improved achievement in their classes, too.
>
> Some parents initially resisted the change from a traditional, more measured progress structure. After seeing their children's motivation to learn and higher order skill development, their fears seem to have subsided.

The teams recommend that schools considering a similar program should:

Receive additional training in most cases. Teachers learn strategies for working with small groups from in-service workshops.

Build-in a lot of time for preparation and collaboration with other teachers. Working up innovative, creative ideas, the non-textbook type, is time consuming and can be overwhelming.

Restructuring Schools suggest several strategies useful in keeping up the momentum:

- Continuing staff development for teachers involved in the Restructuring effort;
- Time for collaborative work - a common planning period or release time for those involved in the Restructuring Effort that afford them an opportunity to plan, replan and give progress report;
- Regular in-service training for all teachers and administrators in areas related to restructuring;
- An active campaign to communicate the program's effectiveness;
- Pairing and sharing with other schools that are restructuring;
- Strong, committed leadership from the principal and other administrative personnel.

COMMON INDICATORS OF EFFECTIVENESS

- Teacher morale, satisfaction and productivity are up since they have become more involved in decision-making and encourage to be innovate and creative in their teaching;
- Students are more motivated, more engaged in learning and more challenged. They have become more thoughtful, deliberate and reflecting;
- Fewer of the students involved in effective programs have dropped out of school and fewer disciplinary problems are reported;
- More students are making the honor roll.

THE COMMON PRINCIPLES

1. The school should focus on helping adolescents to ***learn to use their minds well.*** Schools should not attempt to be "comprehensive" if such a claim is made at the expense of the school's central intellectual purpose.

2. The school's goals should be simple: that each student ***master a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge.*** While these skills and areas will, to varying degrees, reflect the traditional academic disciplines, the program's design should be shaped by the intellectual and imaginative powers and competencies that students need, rather than necessarily by "subjects" as conventionally defined. The aphorism "Less Is More" should dominate: curricular decisions should be guided by the aim of thorough student mastery and achievement rather than by an effort merely to "cover content."

3. ***The school's goals should apply to all students,*** while the means to these goals will vary as those students themselves vary. School practice should be tailor-made to meet the needs of every group or class of adolescents.

4. ***Teaching and learning should be personalized*** to the maximum feasible extent. Efforts should be directed toward a goal that no teacher have direct responsibility for more than eighty students. To capitalize on this personalization, decisions about the details of the course of study, the use of students' and teachers' time and the choice of teaching materials and specific pedagogies must be unreservedly placed in the hands of the principal and staff.

5. ***The governing practical metaphor of the school should be student-as-worker,*** rather than the more familiar metaphor of teacher-as-deliverer-of-instructional-services. Accordingly, a prominent pedagogy will be coaching, to provoke students to learn how to learn and thus to teach themselves.

6. Students entering secondary school studies are those who can show competence in language and elementary mathematics. Students of traditional high school age but not yet at appropriate levels of competence to enter secondary school studies will be provided intensive remedial work to assist them quickly to meet these standards. The ***diploma should be awarded upon a successful final demonstration of mastery*** for graduation — an "Exhibition." This Exhibition by the student of his or her grasp of the central skills and knowledge of the school's program may be jointly administered by the faculty and by higher authorities. As the diploma is awarded when earned, the school's program proceeds with no strict age grading and with no system of "credits earned" by "time spent" in class. The emphasis is on the students' demonstration that they can do important things.

7. The tone of the school should explicitly and self-consciously stress values of ***unanxious expectation*** ("I won't threaten you but I expect much of you"), of ***trust*** (until abused) and of ***decency*** (the values of fairness, generosity and tolerance). Incentives appropriate to the school's particular students and teachers should be emphasized, and parents should be treated as essential collaborators.

8. ***The principal and teachers should perceive themselves as generalists first*** (teachers and scholars in general education) and specialists second (experts in but one particular discipline). Staff should expect multiple obligations (teacher-counselor-manager) and a sense of commitment to the entire school.

9. Ultimate administrative and budget targets should include, in addition to ***total student loads per teacher of eighty or fewer pupils, substantial time for collective planning by teachers, competitive salaries for staff and an ultimate per pupil cost not to exceed that at traditional schools by more than ten percent.*** To accomplish this, administrative plans may have to show the phased reduction or elimination of some services now provided students in many traditional comprehensive secondary schools.

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